The University of Alaska Fairbanks has identified a desire for a campus clock tower. The purpose of this document is for an initial conceptual review, and does not serve as an exhaustive design exercise. Additional efforts will be required to develop a design appropriate for UAF, its branding and visual identity.

**Design**

Specific design components of the clock tower will relate to its overall character and how it represents UAF. Its size and scale are somewhat independent from these attributes, and are more tied to how it relates to adjacent areas and its level of importance to the campus. Similar to hierarchies used within campus planning documents, a feature like the clock tower needs to be assessed by whether it is a campus-wide element, relates more to a specific campus-zone, or is tied to be of localized importance. Decisions such as these will guide the desired location and also inform design criteria such as scale and complexity and the accompanying impacts on implementation costs.

**Functional Criteria**

Initial criteria that have been identified for the clock tower are:

- it shall have a lighted clock face,
- it shall not be climbable,
- it should be located as a focal element, and
- it shall serve a functional purpose for telling time.

Additional recommended criteria include:

- its design and placement shall be consistent with UAF planning documents,
- its design and function should relate to UAF and its unique characteristics, and
- its size and design should relate to its location, and whether it emphasizes campus-wide, campus zone, or localized importance.

**Locations**

Four potential locations are currently proposed that relate to fulfilling aspects of campus planning.

- Options 1, 2, and 3 are located within the Core area of campus and should be of a large pedestrian-scale and designed to complement surrounding architecture. With architectural styles of the UAF Campus Core being varied, a simple and clean design style is recommended.
- Option 4 is located at the intersection of Geist Road and Thompson Drive and would help to define this as an important campus gateway to and from the community. This option would require a larger clock tower that responds to longer sightlines and being located in a more vehicular-based area. (Thompson Drive has been identified as an important campus gateway in the Campus Master Plan and locating a gateway element at this intersection with Geist Road was identified in the Trails and Greenways Plan as a priority. There are other designated locations on campus that could benefit from a Gateway, such as the Alumni Drive, Tanana Loop, and South Chandalar intersection which was identified in the Campus Master Plan as a priority for gateway development. A clock tower does not necessarily fit in this location as well as at the Thompson Drive/Geist Road intersection due to higher volumes of vehicular traffic and activities.)

**Styles**

A very large palette of styles is available for a clock tower. Items such as campus importance, scale and location need to be determined prior to examining specific design-elements. A clock tower can take any form and design, with standardized clock elements being able to be installed into custom enclosures. This document illustrates relevant examples of clock towers in other locations, and also presents initial concepts for the location options listed above.

The Northwestern University’s Rebecca Crown Center Clock Tower is an iconic piece of contemporary architecture that acts as a gateway to the campus.

The Stanford Clock Tower has an attached pergola at the base and has a simple, contemporary style that matches surrounding architecture.

The clock tower at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington is also a good example of simple design that would suit UAF.

The Keynesham Clock Tower in a small town in England provides a focal point for a public plaza and is a good example of simple clock design that is appealing and relates to more modern architecture.

**UAF Clock Tower**

Clock Tower Options 2014-11-26
Gateway
A large clock tower (25-30’ in height) should have the mass and design features to serve as an important element within a campus gateway area. It needs to be large enough to be seen at longer distances, be visible to people in cars traveling at higher speeds, and provide a high level of campus visual identity and branding.

Materials and delivery - varies based on design

Feature
The pedestrian-scale sized clock tower (20-25’ in height) could serve as a feature element to reinforce designed areas on campus by serving as a focal point. It would likely be shorter than a Gateway clock tower in order to fit in with surrounding architecture and the pedestrian environment.

Materials and delivery - in the range of $100,000. This does not include design, foundation, power supply, site preparations, related landscaping and project management.

Element
A post clock in (10-15’ in height) could serve as an accent element within a localized campus pedestrian area or node. Generally they are a 2-4 sided large clock face on a post. These post clock are mostly functional in that they tell the time and can be placed to accent an area with high pedestrian use, or serve as a small focal element.

Materials and delivery - in the range of $38,000. This does not include design, foundation, power supply, site preparations, related landscaping and project management.
Long-term Possibilities

The west facade of Gruening faces onto the proposed South Chandalar Pedestrian Corridor (currently in planning phases per the Campus Wide Core Access Plan of 2014). It has been noted that this facade currently displays many ‘back of house’ functions. This building will be the visual terminus of a very strong pedestrian corridor once the improvements have been built, so opportunities for Gruening should be investigated.

For example, the stair tower on Gruening’s west facade is in an ideal location to be re-envisioned as a new stair and clock tower with possible illuminated element. This would create a very iconic focal point for this proposed pedestrian corridor as well as the Campus Core.

More Detailed Design Ideas

A custom clock tower could be designed as a sculptural element that highlights UAF culture and identity. There are many benefits to be gained through collaboration with the UAF Art Department and the UAF Engineering Department by using such a feature as a way to exhibit design and structural capabilities. Such integration strengthens campus connections and relationships.

A clock tower also presents an opportunity to showcase the unique subarctic climate of Fairbanks and UAF. There may be opportunities to use materials and techniques that tie the sculpture to the local environment by making natural phenomenon visible. This may include materials that change with temperature fluctuations, or designs that are tied to daylight levels. These environmental visualizations could be highly unique, and act as teaching tools in addition to aesthetic opportunities that they offer.

An example shown above is a solar-powered art piece that interacts with users during periods of low-light, and charged during the day. While feasibility and design of an element like this would need to be studied, it presents just one creative example of how to tie local conditions into design. The sundial shown above shows a simpler option than could be customized to our arctic conditions to show the large variations in solar patterns in Fairbanks.
A Clock Tower in these locations reinforces the long east/west axis through Constitution Plaza, draws people from the Wood Center drop-off to the west entry of Rasmuson, and is also visually connected to the proposed South Chandalar Pedestrian Corridor. The location closest to Constitution would even help visually connect this space to Cornerstone Plaza. This tower should reflect similar materials and style to the Wood Center.

A Clock Tower in this location creates a visual anchor for Cornerstone Plaza, connects Cornerstone to Constitution Plaza, and is in a very prominent location for campus identity. Its form could relate to the historical architecture of Signers’ Hall.

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A Clock Tower in this location would serve as a campus gateway (similar to location 4). It would not benefit Geist Road traffic but would be a highly visible sculptural element for those entering campus from this direction.

A Clock Tower in this location would reinforce this area as a campus gateway (as recognized in the UAF Trails and Greenways plan as a priority). It would benefit Geist Road and Thompson Drive traffic and would be a highly visible sculptural element for those entering campus from these directions.

**Proposed Locations and Suggested Scale**

**UAF Clock Tower**

Clock Tower Options 2014-11-26
Option 1 - Terminus of South Chandalar Pedestrian Corridor

Seat walls and landscape elements would accent the terminus of the South Chandalar Pedestrian Corridor.

A Clock Tower could serve as a key campus feature in this location.

* Note: Clock Tower shown is representative only of desired scale and general size. Design character shall be developed with the client.
Option 1a - Accent Element at South Chandalar Crossing

A post clock could serve as a useful and aesthetic feature in this location.

Seat walls and landscape elements would accent the terminus of this long pedestrian corridor.

* Note: Clock Tower shown is representative only of desired scale and general size. Design character shall be developed with the client.

UAF Clock Tower
Clock Tower Options 2014-11-26
Option 2 - North end of Cornerstone Plaza

20-25' height Clock Tower with simple design to complement the different styles of Gruening, Rasmuson, and Signers’ Hall.

* Note: Clock Tower shown is representative only of desired scale and general size. Design character shall be developed with the client.
Option 3 - Along East-West axis of Constitution Plaza

20-25' height Clock Tower with simple design to complement Wood Center architecture.

* Note: Clock Tower shown is representative only of desired scale and general size. Design character shall be developed with the client.
Option 4 - Geist Road and Thompson Drive Intersection

25-30' height Clock Tower with simple design intended to reinforce UAF visual identity and this location as a campus gateway. This may include landscape and architectural elements and UAF gateway signage.

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Option 4b - Parking Lot on Thompson Drive

25-30’ height Clock Tower with simple design intended to reinforce UAF visual identity and this location as a campus gateway. This may include landscape and architectural elements and UAF gateway signage.

* Note: Clock Tower shown is representative only of desired scale and general size. Design character shall be developed with the client.